Imagine enjoying your favorite meal at your favorite restaurant. Your first thought is "compliments to the chef" but it actually took a lot more to deliver your dish.

Take a moment to digest that.

The menu was created by an Executive Chef, based on the restaurateur’s vision.

The kitchen and dining room were arranged by designers to streamline service, maximize capacity—and your enjoyment.

Prep stations were supplied with ingredients by trusted vendors—businesses selected for optimum quality and freshness. A team of line cooks prepped the produce, roasted the entrée and deglazed the sauces.

And countless others worked in harmony—ensuring your order was filled accurately and quickly, that the meal was safe to consume, and that the business operated efficiently. And whether you see them or not, all are integral to delivering your perfect plate, every time.

That’s because food service is professionalized. Like medicine, construction, and even software development, food service has standards, rules and processes in place to ensure that the product and experience are delivered safely, predictably, and cost-effectively.

Professionalizing AI isn’t so different.

To scale the use and impact of AI in an organization, you need to distinguish clear roles and objectives, demand education and training, define processes, and democratize AI literacy. It starts with your strategic goals. Like the restaurateur and Executive Chef defining their vision, your C-suite needs to be well-tuned to the market and customer needs.

Then your designated AI Lead will work with them to define the strategy to deliver your goals—defining protocols so your team feels confident they’re scaling data and AI effectively and responsibly.

They’ll consolidate platforms and establish cloud partnerships, build out the teams and infrastructure, and codify standards for data lineage and veracity—just as you would for safely sourcing, storing, and preparing food. They’ll build or train a team who, like the cooks, divide and conquer to integrate and train data, build and optimize models, and design intuitive experiences—bringing the strategic vision to life…all guided by product owners and business analysts who bridge the gap between your vision and your customers.

And the better your ingredients—that is, data and data sources—the better the experiences will be.

But AI specialists can’t work in a bubble. To continually deliver on customer expectations—
and even innovate for new routes to strategic growth—they need to work in lock-step with the business.

Once your interdisciplinary team is established and equipped with the right training and resources, you’ll be cooking with gas. It’s time to professionalize AI.